

Learning report summary Tanzania 2007

District computerization Kinondoni

“More work is done in a short time”

The project “District computerization Kinondoni” is to bring about good governance in the Kinondoni District (Dar es Salaam), a municipality with about 1,000,000 inhabitants, by harnessing information for decision-making through the use of ICT's. The project has been in implementation since 2001 and has been using the IICD system for Monitoring and Evaluation since 2003. In the course of last year, 51 users of the ICT services filled in a questionnaire on how they perceived satisfaction and impact of the project. The outcome of an analysis of these questionnaires was discussed during a Focus Group meeting in Dar es Salaam in April 2007.

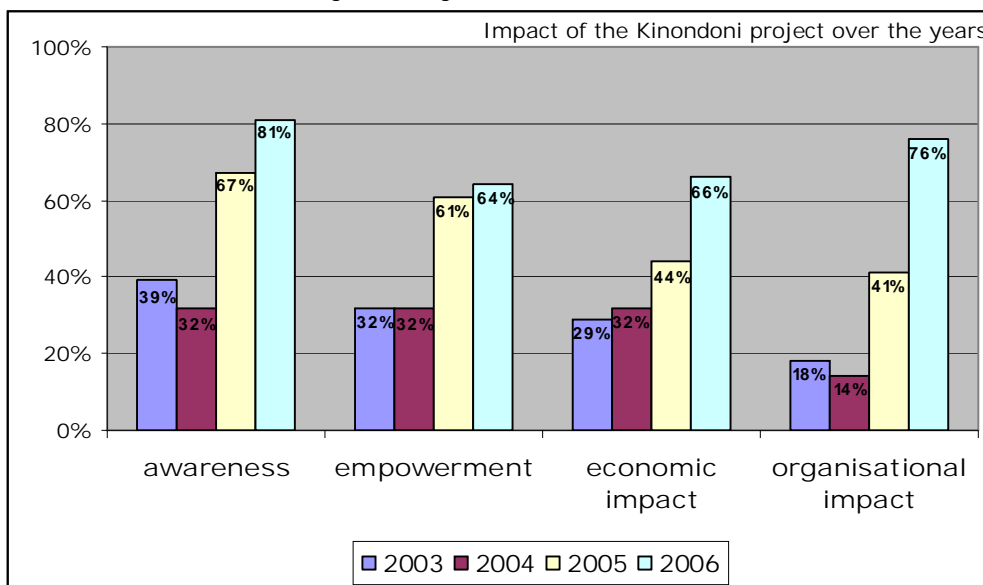
The questionnaires were filled in during a meeting, attended by users from various departments. More than half (51%) of the respondents however consisted of support staff, mainly women: the secretaries that were working with computers at the various departments. Unfortunately this did mean that the evaluation was somewhat skewed, since it lacked participation of (male) managers.

Satisfaction of the services of the project went down in 2006: 62% of respondents claimed to have achieved their goals, compared to 85% in 2005. Those respondents that did reach their goals claimed that Reports were well done and efficiency increased: “More work is done in short time; something I was not taught before”. Those who did not reach their goals mainly attributed this to lack of (appropriate) training mostly: “I haven't gotten training which can enhance me to get enough

knowledge in my computer issues”. These statements are supported by satisfaction on training and technical assistance: in both cases the satisfaction has gone down in the last year.

Interestingly, users of the project did view high (and rising) impact of the project. Especially organisational impact, an indicator for transparency of the government, customisation and timeliness of reports, has been raising a lot (76% of users this year, compared to 41% last year). This high impact is also shown by answers to the question what users had done as a result of the project: “To read and compare past reports and budgets”, or: “To educate and assist others in and out of the work place”

As Kinondoni is struggling with few ICT-staff that have to help out many people working with ICTs, the problems with technical



assistance and training did not come as a surprise. This was also the reason to make this a theme of discussion during the Focus Group meeting.

The meeting was held in April, with 30 users from different departments and -this time- different levels: support staff, ICT staff and management attended the meeting, which used role play to facilitate dialogue. One group of end users and one group consisting of ICT staff members were both asked to prepare a small play on the issues concerning technical assistance. Each group had to address positive and negative aspects of the technical assistance and in both plays end users and ICT staff members had to be acted out. This motivated the participants to step in each other shoes and to take both points of view into consideration. Two other groups, both consisting of end users, made plays concerning organisational efficiency: Do ICTs really make the workplace more efficient?



Role play during the Focus Group

The plays (in Kiswahili) resulted in a lot of laughter and sounds of approval; many participants recognised the situations in the scenes that for instance showed a member of the ICT staff using very technical language with puzzled-looking users or a secretary without appropriate training, trying to help

out her boss who was too busy to deal with the computer.

After all plays, the participants made a list of concrete points of action. The points were not only addressing the ICT staff, but also the management and all other users. Ideas brought forward were:

- ICT staff members have to give simple advice and guidelines to end users; the language used is sometimes not understood.
- A protocol needs to be developed on what people can expect from ICT staff.
- ICT staff members need to be trained in system organization and management: effective communication and scheduling and classifying of tasks (urgency and severity).
- The management needs to put in place a (holistic) Institutional ICT development plan.
- The management can produce reports on ICT use and efficiency of workers. Not only focused on the work tasks of the day, but also on general efficiency.
- Other users need to become more able to fix common problems themselves: learn how to use Help key on the computer and use sheets on the wall with basic troubleshooting tips (to be produced by ICT staff).

The meeting was enthusiastically looked back on by the participants, as they stressed the fact that they were now able to put themselves in their co-workers place much better and many interesting solutions were brought forward.

In order to address the problems of technical assistance and lack of training, IICD and its private partner Inter Access, will work with the Kinondoni ICT staff in the months to come.

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